

Summer Institute on Teaching Mathematics and Science in English
Cyprus, June 2006
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The Phantom Tollbooth

By

Norton Juster

Read Milo's story below

Milo's actions and words suggest a challenging situation

Underline words and phrases that highlight the key issues

Identify the challenges and suggest solutions

There was once a boy named Milo who didn't know what to do with himself - not just sometimes, but always. When he was in school, he longed to be out, and when he was out he longed to be in. On the way he thought about coming home, and coming home he thought about going. Wherever he was he wished he were somewhere else, and when he got there he wondered why he'd bothered. Nothing really interested him - least of all the things that should have.

"It seems to me that almost everything is a waste of time," he remarked one day as he walked dejectedly home from school. "I can't see the point in learning to solve useless problems, or subtracting turnips from turnips, or knowing where Ethiopia is or how to spell February" And, since no one bothered to explain otherwise, he regarded the process of seeking knowledge as the greatest waste of time of all. (p. 9)